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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Holy God, the source of our strength, we need You this day and always. Continue to sustain our lawmakers, fulfilling Your promise to supply their needs.

Lord, we confess that we don't have all the answers, for our judgment is sometimes inadequate for the challenges we face. We need You, therefore, to guide our Senators to know what is right and do it, to discern Your best for America and to act promptly.

Lord, we know You are willing to help those who confess their dependence on You, leading them toward workable solutions and creative compromise.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDING OFFICER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 14, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, a Senator from the State of Delaware, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COONS thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we will be in a period of morning business until 3 p.m. today. During that period of time, Senators will be allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each. Following morning business, the Senate will adopt the motion to proceed to the consideration of H.R. 2354. There will be no rollcall votes today. The next rollcall votes will be Tuesday morning in relation to two U.S. district judges.

SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last week something wonderful and unusual happened here in the Senate: We passed a worthy piece of legislation with a nearly unanimous vote. On the eve of Veterans Day, we honored this Nation's service men and women by passing bipartisan legislation to spur hiring of this country's nearly 900,000 out-of-work veterans. Two hundred fifty thousand of these unemployed veterans became members of the Armed Services because of the global fight on terror basically in the last 10 years. I trust our action last week meant as much, or more, than our words of thanks and praise for these dedicated men and women who serve us so well. But the Senate has much more work to do this work period, this week and into next week, if necessary. I hope that same

spirit of cooperation will hold during this next few days. The Senate has much more work to be done, as I have indicated, because we have work that is essential to the functioning of our government.

As we continue to focus on the efforts to create jobs and get our economy moving again, we must also pass appropriations bills, which is part of our yearly responsibility. This week, we will consider an appropriations package that includes Energy and Water, Financial Services, and State and Foreign Operations. We need cooperation to move this important piece of legislation. The legislative tree will not be filled, but we need to agree on the way forward. We need to have some responsible way to move forward on these amendments. We are not going to have another situation such as we had a few weeks ago, where we worked until early in the morning—not that the long hours hurt, but we had hundreds of amendments and we had no way of moving through those without having a lot of votes, some of which were totally unnecessary.

We have the continuing resolution we must do before the end of this work period. Although I know there will be some strident debate over amendments to both the appropriations bill and the Defense authorization bill we have to do, we have to work together if we are going to move forward on the Nation's business.

Last month, the Senate passed a bipartisan minibus that included Agriculture, Commerce-State-Justice, Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development. Those appropriations bills were essential, and we were able to complete that. That experience proved that, with cooperation, the Senate can work through the normal appropriations process, but it does take cooperation.

The Senate will consider the conference report on that minibus this week. That conference report will include another short-term continuing

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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